

RESPONSE/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicants would like to express appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, and for the indication that claims 3, 4 and 6 are allowable on the Office Action Summary and on Page 3 of the Official Action.

Applicants submit that the instant amendment is proper for entry after final rejection. Applicants note that no question of new matter nor are any new issues raised in entering the instant amendment of the claims and that no new search would be required.

Moreover, Applicants submit that the instant amendment places the application in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner enter the instant amendment, consider the merits of the same, and indicate the allowability of the present application and each of the pending claims.

Upon entry of the above amendments claim 1 will have been canceled and claim 5 will have been amended, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 3-6 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding objection and rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

In the Official Action, the Examiner rejection Claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. In particular the Examiner takes the position that it is unclear whether "all side surfaces" only refer to said "pair of side surfaces" or all the inherent side surfaces of the main body.

Further, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by CROZET et al. (U.S. No. 6,527,803);

Claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by McGAHAN et al (U.S. Pub. No. 2003/130737); and

Claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by GERBER et al. (2004/0172133).

Applicants respectfully traverse the above-noted rejections of claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

In this regard, without acquiescing to the propriety of the rejections, claim 1 has been canceled, and claim 5 has been amended to depend from claim 3, which has been allowed. Therefore, the rejections of claims 1 and 5 are now believed to be moot, and should be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph and 35 U.S.C. §102(e) is no longer proper at least for each of the above-noted reasons. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and an early indication of the allowance of all of the pending claims.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims in the present application are clearly patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination, and an indication to such effect is respectfully requested, in due course.

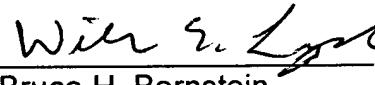
SUMMARY

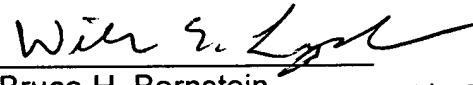
Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request an indication to that effect. Applicants have argued the allowability of the claims and pointed out deficiencies of the applied reference. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and is now believed to be appropriate.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should the Examiner have any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shinnosuke NAKAHARA et al.

  
Bruce H. Bernstein  
Reg. No. 29,027

  
William E. Lyddane  
Reg. No. 41,568

July 3, 2006  
GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.  
1950 Roland Clarke Place  
Reston, VA 20191  
(703) 716-1191